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New York

President:	Mr. Alotaibi	(Kuwait)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mr. Inchauste Jordán
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Ndong Mba
	Ethiopia	Mr. Alemu
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Temenov
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Polyanskiy
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Clay
	United States of America	Ms. French

Agenda

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (S/2018/143)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Reports of the Secretary-General on the Sudan and South Sudan

Special report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (S/2018/143)

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of South Sudan to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: Ms. Bintou Keita, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations; and His Excellency Mr. Ismail Wais, Intergovernmental Authority on Development Special Envoy for South Sudan.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2018/143, which contains the special report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

I now give the floor to Ms. Keita.

Ms. Keita: Mr. President, I thank you for the opportunity to brief the Security Council. Special Envoys Wais and Haysom as well as Special Representative of the Secretary-General Shearer will brief on the peace process and the situation on the ground, respectively. I will thus focus my remarks on the special report of the Secretary-General on the review and renewal of the mandate of United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) (S/2018/143).

In line with the Secretary-General's agenda for reforming the peace and security pillar, the Secretary-General directed the Under-Secretaries-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Field Support (DFS) to undertake independent reviews of eight major peacekeeping operations. The independent review of UNMISS was conducted from November 2017 to January 2018 by an integrated team that included representatives of DPKO and DFS, as well as agencies, funds and programmes, and was led by an independent expert, Mr. Kevin Kennedy, former Under-Secretary-General for the United Nations Department of Safety and Security. The team initially undertook a conflict analysis and consultations at United Nations Headquarters before proceeding to South Sudan, where it received detailed briefings and held extensive consultations with UNMISS and the United Nations country team, the Transitional Government of National Unity, the diplomatic community and non-governmental organizations. The team also visited Addis Ababa and engaged with regional partners and opposition figures. The special report therefore comprises the main findings of the review team and the observations and recommendations of the Secretary-General, to feed into deliberations on the renewal of the UNMISS mandate.

UNMISS was established in 2011 as a capacity-building tool to assist a Government that lacked the capability to deliver services to its people. However, following the December 2013 outbreak of violence, UNMISS evolved into a Mission in which the protection of civilians, including from national security institutions, has become the main focus. This requirement unfortunately remains valid. The situation in South Sudan continues to remain a cause for grave concern for everyone. Tens of thousands of civilians are estimated to have been killed since the conflict began in December 2013. More than 4 million have been displaced, half of whom are now refugees in neighbouring countries.

As documented once again by the Human Rights Council Commission of Inquiry, which published its report last Friday, human rights violations and abuses, including horrific incidents of sexual violence, have reached alarming levels, and impunity for these crimes remains the norm. Moreover, more than 200,000 internally displaced persons continue to be protected on UNMISS bases, with the assistance of humanitarian partners.

Since May 2017, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), supported by the African Union and the United Nations, has been working to revive the political process. A high-level revitalization forum on the peace agreement was convened on 18 December 2017 and delivered a new Cessation of Hostilities Agreement on 21 December. Since the new Agreement came into force on 24 December 2017, it has been breached repeatedly by the parties in various

parts of the country. Special Envoys Wais and Haysom will brief the Council on the progress made during the second phase of the revitalization forum, but let me just echo here the message of the African Union Peace and Security Council, as expressed in its most recent communiqué, dated 8 February. If violations of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and attacks against civilians are to end, we need to ensure that the signatories are held accountable and also deprived of the means to continue fighting. Without criminal accountability for the crimes committed and an end to the supply of weapons and ammunitions to the warring parties, the suffering of the South Sudanese populations is unlikely to end.

Meanwhile, we need to be aware that the economic situation in South Sudan is also expected to continue deteriorating. The army and security agencies have not received salaries for several months. Criminality is increasing and adding to the prevailing insecurity. Civil servant arrears are accumulating and many public-sector employees are no longer reporting to work. South Sudan is ranked 181 of 188 countries on the Human Development Index. The survival of the population will therefore require massive levels of international assistance for the foreseeable future.

The review found that the protection of civilians sites continue to dominate UNMISS protection of civilians activities. Managing and providing humanitarian assistance to those sites — a collective effort between the Mission and the humanitarian community — is a major and difficult undertaking. Some sites have become highly politicized, witnessing the activities of competing gangs and smuggling of goods — a level of criminality that is extremely difficult to manage with existing resources and without the cooperation of the Government, despite sustained efforts to improve security in its midst. The protection of civilians sites remain a continuing point of friction with the Government, which claims that it provides refuge to elements of the armed opposition and is refusing to investigate and prosecute crimes perpetrated on its premises. Despite UNMISS efforts, and in the absence of criminal prosecution, sexual and gender-based violence has become a serious problem at some of them, where approximately 80 per cent of the population is comprised of women and children.

The review found that largely over 50 per cent of the Mission's uniformed personnel are currently devoted to protecting those sites. While the vast majority of the people in the protection of civilians sites are there for their physical protection, and the protection of civilians sites will remain the responsibility of the Mission until the hosted population feel safe enough to leave them, those sites only represent a fraction of the South Sudanese civilians in need of protection. There are no easy answers to that dilemma. There will never be enough troops both to protect the protection of civilians sites and to extend the UNMISS protection footprint to other areas of large displacements in a country as large as South Sudan and with 2 million displaced. Increasing the effectiveness of protection efforts beyond the protection of civilians sites will need to continue being a major priority of the Mission, notably through the development of an integrated and people-focused, system-wide protection approach, aimed at filling existing gaps, generating synergies and removing duplication, and thus possible wastage of resources.

With respect to the Regional Protection Force (RPF), since resolution 2304 (2016) was adopted on 12 August 2016, the security conditions in the capital have changed substantially. Today, while the risk of instability and violence remains, the threat of military conflict in Juba has considerably diminished. The current environment in Juba therefore may call for some adjustment of the RPF mandate as currently scripted. Following the review, the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has ordered the conduct of a military and police capability study to explore how fewer troops can be dedicated to the protection of civilians sites and more deployed throughout the country to protect other civilians under imminent threats of violence. The capability study will also need to address the configuration of the RPF, as it is likely to have to support revised transitional security arrangements, to be agreed upon during the High-Level Revitalization Forum.

South Sudan came into being with extremely limited institutional capacity in all areas of governance and Government services, with the exception of military forces. That situation has not improved in subsequent years. Poor governance and economic collapse have compromised already weak rule-of-law institutions. In the current political and security environment, the review found that a full-scale return to capacity-building for rule-of-law institutions is not warranted. An increase in the training of national security institutions in international human rights and humanitarian law and support to the investigation and

prosecution of sexual and gender-based violence are, however, necessary, consistent with the requirements of the human rights due diligence policy. That should be undertaken with existing resources and in close collaboration with the United Nations country team to avoid a duplication of effort.

It is our considered judgment that the most effective way to protect civilians in a sustainable way is to reach a political solution to the conflict. A sustainable political resolution of the conflict is also the only avenue to chalk out a viable exit strategy for UNMISS. The four-pillared mandate of UNMISS remains valid, albeit with some adjustments, but the focus of the Council and the region should undoubtedly be on its fourth pillar, which is to support to the political process. Without progress in the political process, the Mission is likely to have to be deployed for a considerable amount of time, at a considerable cost to the international community. Moreover, in order for UNMISS to deliver on its mandate effectively, the Mission will need to gain unfettered freedom of movement and the full cooperation of the Government, both of which remain insufficient today.

I once again urge the Council to pronounce itself against the repeated violations of the Status of Forces Agreement, as well as the restrictions and impediments imposed on humanitarian partners. In addition, while the Mission has delivered satisfactorily on its task of creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the safety and security of aid workers remain a serious concern that the Government must address urgently. Ninety-two aid workers have so far been killed since the conflict began, and of those 25 were killed in 2017. The safety and security of people whose sole purpose is to provide assistance to the most vulnerable of South Sudanese should be a common cause for all in general, but for the Government in particular.

As communicated by UNMISS on 24 February, an allegation of sexual exploitation involving several police personnel belonging to a Ghanaian formed police unit in Wau was documented at the Wau protection of civilians site. In that respect, let me reaffirm that Headquarters and the UNMISS leadership are fully committed to implementing the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse. As soon as the preliminary results of the investigation came through, the Mission took immediate action and removed the entire unit of 46 police officers from duty within the protection of civilians site and transported them to Juba. That was done to protect witnesses and victims.

The Office of Internal Oversight Services has already begun its investigation into the allegation and, in cooperation with the police-contributing country responsible, all efforts will be made to hold those found to have engaged in sexual exploitation or abuse accountable in line with the existing procedures. On the whole, the Ghanaian peacekeepers and police officers serving in UNMISS have made an excellent contribution to the protection of civilians and to the building of durable peace in South Sudan. It is very disappointing that the behaviour of some police officers risks staining that record of service as well as the Mission's reputation.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate that only a political solution can bring an end to the conflict in South Sudan. There is no military solution. I would urge the Security Council, as well as the African Union and members of IGAD, to use all possible leverage on the parties to reach a viable political agreement so that the people of South Sudan can finally see the peace dividend that has eluded them since independence in 2011.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Ms. Keita for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Wais.

Mr. Wais: First of all, allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your able leadership of the work of the Security Council during this month.

It is with great pleasure that I brief the Security Council today on the status of the ongoing High-Level Revitalization Forum on the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). The briefing is aimed at keeping the Council abreast of the status of implementation of the Revitalization Forum. It will include a review of the mandate of the Forum, the achievements attained during its recent phase, key observations and recommendations for the attention of the Security Council.

The Council will recall that since the July 2016 fighting in Juba, South Sudan, the political, economic and security situation in South Sudan has significantly changed. The emergent realities in the country's political landscape have impeded the effective implementation of the 2015 peace agreement. The Council will further

recall that, as a result, at its thirty-first Extraordinary Summit, held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 12 June 2017, the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided that the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan should be urgently revitalized.

The stated objectives of the revitalization are threefold, namely, to restore the permanent ceasefire, to resume the full and inclusive implementation of the 2015 peace agreement, and to develop revised and realistic timelines and an implementation schedule towards a democratic election at the end of the transitional period.

At the launch of the Revitalization Forum, we sought to pursue the directives of the IGAD leaders highlighted above, including a review of the implementation and oversight mechanism for a revised peace agreement, as well as resource mobilization for its implementation. The latter are consequential issues pertaining to the effective implementation of the revitalized 2015 peace agreement.

IGAD successfully launched and concluded the first phase of the Revitalization Forum, which was convened from 18 to 22 December 2017. The parties deliberated and eventually signed the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Protection of Civilians and Humanitarian Access on 21 December 2017. As a follow-up, a workshop on the cessation of hostilities was convened in Addis Ababa from 24 to 25 January to assist the parties and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism (CTSAMM) with the requisite tools to implement the critical provisions of the Agreement. To that end, specific modalities that would enable the full implementation of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities were developed.

The guiding principle of silencing the guns ahead of the commencement of the talks of the second phase was to establish the necessary conditions for the South Sudanese stakeholders to discuss substantive issues of the revitalization. It was also intended to contribute to confidence-building among the parties to the Agreement on the Cessation of Hostilities, on the one hand, and the South Sudanese citizenry awaiting the return of peace to their beloved country, on the other hand.

The second phase of the Revitalization Forum was convened from 5 to 16 February at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa. Its main goal was to deliberate and to agree on ways to restore the permanent ceasefire, to resume the full implementation of the peace agreement, and to develop revised and realistic implementation schedules towards a democratic election at the end of the transitional period. In the course of the 11 days, however, the Forum focused on a declaration of principles and on revitalizing chapters I and II of the peace agreement, and achieved the following outcomes.

The parties constructively deliberated on a declaration of principles intended to guide the discussion on the revitalization of the 2015 peace agreement. The declaration of principles was signed by all the parties except the Transitional Government of National Unity. The parties also constructively deliberated and agreed on some provisions of governance during a new transitional period and on most of the provisions of the chapter on the permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements. Where the parties achieved consensus on the provisions of chapters I and II of the 2015 peace agreement, the heads of delegation duly initialled those articles.

Although the majority of the issues on governance discussed within the specific articles were agreed upon, there were divergent views on the sharing of responsibilities in the revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity, particularly in the executive, legislature and judiciary, including governance arrangements at the State level.

On the permanent ceasefire and transitional security arrangements, the parties agreed on several articles, including the permanent ceasefire, the composition and restructuring of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism, and the new structure for the command and control of forces during the transitional period. However, the parties had significant differences on articles 5 and 7 regarding transitional security arrangements and the unification of forces, respectively. The opposition groups would like to see practical measures that guarantee their security if they return to Juba even if that security is provided by a third party.

Despite the facilitation's best efforts, in view of the divergent opinions put forward by the parties and the inability to achieve consensus on some articles, the facilitation suspended the adoption of the outstanding issues to allow the parties more time to consult and to re-evaluate their respective positons. The facilitation will continue to engage the parties bilaterally to ensure that they reach some realistic consensus sooner

rather than later. As for the pending provisions of the contentious articles, including on the sharing of responsibilities, the facilitation will present them for further deliberation and agreement in the next phase of the Forum.

On the status of adherence to the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities, Civilian Protection and Humanitarian Access, I regret to inform the Council that fighting incidents have continued to be reported in South Sudan, even as the second phase of the Revitalization Forum was ongoing. Worse still, those incidents disrupted the Forum for a day, as one of the parties protested the continued alleged violations of the Agreement on Cessation of Hostilities by walking away from the talks.

Related, provocative statements also continued to be made against the ceasefire monitoring body and its personnel. Those incidents are unacceptable and clearly demonstrate the lack of good will and compliance with the agreement by the individuals and parties involved in those violations. Although those incidents are being investigated by CTSAMM to identify violators, it is imperative that the Council, in cooperation with the region and the African Union Peace and Security Council, consider urgently needed and appropriate measures for holding accountable violators and spoilers of the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement whose identity has been verified by CTSAMM. Such measures would be in line with and include the decision of the twenty-eighth Extraordinary Summit of IGAD Heads of State and Government of 7 November 2014, which clearly spelled out consequences for violating the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement. The Council may recall the third IGAD Assembly resolution, which prescribes penalties for such violators. It states that:

> "Any violation of the cessation of the hostilities by any party will invite the following collective action by the IGAD region against those responsible for such violations, which will include, but are not limited to: (a) the enactment of asset freezes; (b) the enactment of travel bans within the region; and (c) [the] denial of the supply of arms and ammunition, and any other material that could be used in war."

I commend the Council for demonstrating its unwavering support to the ongoing revitalization process and for the strong statements that it has issued in the quest for sustainable peace in South Sudan. As I conclude, I would like to pose the following questions for the Council's consideration: How can the Council make non-compliance with the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and implementation of the revitalized peace agreement costly to the spoilers and violators; How can we guarantee the security of the opposition in Juba upon its return and the inclusive implementation of the peace agreement; and how can we avoid a repetition of the July 16 fighting in Juba? Those questions demand policy decisions that would prevent a relapse into armed conflict in South Sudan.

Lastly, I reiterate my appeal to the Council for its continuous support for both the region and the continent in ensuring that the Revitalization Forum process reaches a successful conclusion that restores peace and stability in the Republic of South Sudan.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank Mr. Wais for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Mr. Ndong Mba (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Republic of Equatorial Guinea expresses its gratitude to the presidency of the Security Council for convening this meeting and for the briefings we just heard by Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Bintou Keita and the Special Envoy for the Sudan of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), His Excellency Mr. Ismail Wais, which have given us a clear picture of the situation in South Sudan.

The Government of my country is closely following with much concern the developing situation in South Sudan since, according to the available reports, the political and security situation continues to be delicate and fragile, and the challenges facing the country remain substantial. Equatorial Guinea is bound to South Sudan by ties of particular affection. It was no coincidence that the proclamation of the independence of South Sudan coincided with His Excellency Mr. Obiang Nguema Mbasogo's term as President of the African Union. He personally participated in the historic event in Juba on 9 July 2011 and made his contribution to the process. Since that time, we have followed events in that brotherly country, for which I want to reiterate our support concerning the peace process and our commitment to stability and prosperity of South Sudan.

Equatorial Guinea believes that support for the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the

African Union and other regional and subregional organizations is key to continuing mediation efforts among the opposing parties in South Sudan. The international community as a whole must step up its efforts to promote the political process in the country, which, given recent events, is the only realistic way to find a just and lasting resolution to the crisis facing a nation with certain economic potential. It is important that the parties to the conflict refrain from taking actions that could worsen the situation, and that they take measures to implement and honour the signed Cessation of Hostilities Agreement, which entails the cessation of hostilities, the protection of civilians, access to humanitarian aid and an immediate return to the negotiations table.

Accordingly, the joint statement on the situation in South Sudan by the Secretary-General and the Chairperson of the African Union Commission on 12 January deserves the support of Equatorial Guinea. Moreover, the outcome of the trilateral meeting among the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, the Chairperson of IGAD and the Secretary-General on January 27 in Addis Ababa merit the support of Equatorial Guinea. The Government of South Sudan must assume a leadership role in the political process in the country and continue its efforts to end clashes together with all other actors. We are all aware that, without the resolute support of the international community, it will be difficult to overcome the impasse in South Sudan.

To that end, we believe that the international community must continue to support current mediation efforts, especially those of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the African Union, and look for ways to ensure the success of the new phase of the High-Level Revitalization Forum process.

The Security Council must speak with one voice in situations like the that in South Sudan, as well as in difficult situations in which people are critically suffering. We must speak with one voice. We must provide constructive assistance to South Sudan. The members are convinced of the need to adopt harsh measures, but, as I said in my statement in January (see S/PV.8166), we must also pursue other parallel actions, such as the trip to Juba in December initiated by Ambassador Nikki Haley. Such actions must be persistent and continuous. The data concerning the humanitarian situation are worrying. It is therefore extremely important that humanitarian aid reach those who need it the most, and all parties to the conflict must allow such access without restrictions. That situation, combined with the massive number of internally displaced persons fleeing to neighbouring countries, presupposes the acute suffering of a vulnerable civilian population who are enduring violations of all kinds.

Lastly, I would like to convey Equatorial Guinea's support for and acknowledgment of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan. We highly appreciate its efforts and contributions to bringing peace and stability in South Sudan in very difficult and complex conditions, in which its personnel's lives are put at risk as they are exposed to potentially fatal attacks.

Mr. Inchauste Jordán (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Bintou Keita for her introduction of the special report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/143). Likewise, we also welcome the presence of the Special Envoy for South Sudan of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), His Excellency Mr. Ismail Wais. We thank him for his briefing today and take this opportunity to express our delegation's full support for the work he has been doing to make it possible for dialogue and the negotiation of a political settlement in South Sudan to succeed.

We would like once again to express our concern about the difficult security situation, the slow progress in the process of political dialogue and, above all, the precarious humanitarian conditions in South Sudan, all of which compounds an already difficult economic situation. Against that complicated backdrop, we are aware that it is very difficult to find an immediate solution, especially in the light of the deep divisions between the parties. It is necessary for regional organizations, the United Nations and the international community to unify their efforts and work in the same direction with clear objectives in mind. We in the Security Council have agreed that the only way out of this conflict will be through a process of inclusive and sincere political dialogue among the parties that leads to compliance with the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.

Accordingly, we welcome IGAD's leadership and commitment to the people of South Sudan. Despite the difficulties that lie ahead, IGAD continues to strive to bring the Government and the opposition groups to the table for dialogue. It is clear that this kind of process

will not produce positive results until the parties take their commitments seriously and demonstrate genuine political will to see them implemented.

We welcome the progress that has been made in the second phase of the High-level Revitalization Forum on the peace process in South Sudan. We emphasize the inclusiveness of the process and encourage the parties to continue to follow that path. While there are differences on key issues such as governance and transitional security arrangements, the parties need to engage constructively with the process, which we hope will resume as soon as possible. In the same vein, we call for compliance with theagreement on the cessation of hostilities, the protection of civilians and humanitarian access, which is fundamental to the continuation of the second phase of the Forum.

Furthermore, the humanitarian situation remains alarming. The data presented by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) show us a very difficult reality, in which around 60 per cent of the population will need humanitarian assistance in 2018. Millions of refugees and internally displaced persons face a lack of basic services, food insecurity and the outbreak of diseases such as cholera, together with the potential threat of famine in some parts of the country. We are also concerned about the many challenges that lie ahead this year. We call on the international community to cooperate with OCHA to ensure the provision of humanitarian assistance in South Sudan.

Similarly, we believe that it is essential that a good operational environment be provided for humanitarian workers and the United Nations Mission in Southern Sudan (UNMISS). We call on Government and opposition forces to guarantee security for humanitarian actors throughout the country and allow for unrestricted access for humanitarian aid. We also welcome the conclusions of the special report of the Secretary-General on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan.

We believe that we must give priority to strengthening the political process in the country, support humanitarian access, take measures to prevent violations of the status of forces agreement, fight impunity and support the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan under the leadership of the African Union. We also believe that the possibility of adopting a more efficient model that takes advantage of the full capabilities of United Nations staff in the field should be explored. We must also review the mandate of the Regional Protection Force in order to adapt it to the current environment.

In conclusion, we would like to express our sincere thanks to the United Nations team, UNMISS and humanitarian actors for their dedicated and committed work in the difficult environment of South Sudan.

Mr. Temenov (Kazakhstan): I join previous speakers in thanking Assistant Secretary-General Bintou Keita and Special Envoy Ismail Wais for their comprehensive briefings and commitment to seeking a solution for the crisis in South Sudan. My delegation would like to make the following comments on three issues.

First, on the humanitarian situation, the continuing military actions, widespread violence and economic decline have resulted in escalating a humanitarian crisis in which more than 5 million people are suffering from severe food insecurity and 4 million South Sudanese have been displaced. Timely and effective humanitarian assistance is therefore extremely critical. Despite the presidential decree of 9 November, which ordered free movement for humanitarian actors, there is still no tangible improvement in humanitarian access to those in greatest need. At the same time, aid workers continue to be attacked and killed in different parts of the country. We therefore call on all signatories to the agreement of 21 December 2017 to immediately cease all hostilities and facilitate humanitarian access in accordance with that greement and strictly adhere to international humanitarian law and human rights law.

Secondly, on the political process, Kazakhstan praises the efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) to implement the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, which is the only way to achieve stability and progress in the country. We welcome the conduct of the second phase of the IGAD's High-level Revitalization Forum, which took place from 5 to 16 February, and hope that the Forum will result in the conclusion of a political agreement. It is of critical importance that the Council remain united in supporting the High-level Forum and in encouraging the parties to act in good faith. Furthermore, the support of South Sudan's neighbours is equally important if the Forum is to succeed. To be more effective, the political negotiations

should be bolstered by intercommunal reconciliation and confidence-building among local populations, as well as comprehensive strategies in economic development and resilience-building, with the full engagement of women and young people.

Thirdly, on the upcoming reconfiguration of the United Nations Mission inSouth Sudan (UNMISS), including the Regional Protection Force (RPF), Kazakhstan highly appreciates UNMISS for implementing its mandated tasks under very difficult circumstances. We support the recommendations of the Secretary-General's independent review of UNMISS, which asserts that the current mandate of Mission remains relevant, but that it should be modified to strengthen capacity-building and training of the armed forces and State institutions through a long-term security-sector reform programme.

We note some progress achieved in deploying the Regional Protection Force, which will enhance the capacity of UNMISS to protect civilians and improve the security environment. At the same time, we agree with the conclusion of the special report that the concept, mandate and configuration of the RPF need to be adapted to the current political and security environment.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to thank the President for convening today's meeting and for the briefings of Ms. Bintou Keita and Mr. Ismail Wais. We also wish to highlight the important work they are doing.

We are dismayed by the extent of the humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, as well as the ethnic violence and atrocities reported in the first report of the Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan, which includes perverse and systematic practices of sexual violence against women and childre . It is urgent to put an end to those crimes and punish those responsible. At the same time, the parties must comply with the cessation of hostilities agreement and commit to the revitalization of the South Sudanese peace process.

Peru supports efforts to revitalize that process and reiterates that the only way to achieve sustainable peace is through a political solution, which can be achieved only with the resolute determination of all parties. The parties to the conflict must be made aware of the opportunity to put an end to the conflict presented by the involvement of the international community, in particular the regional actors. We note that that opportunity could be ruined by the South Sudanese parties' lack of responsibility. In that regard, we stress the importance of the efforts made by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), the African Union and the United Nations to contain violence, end the suffering of the South Sudanese people, find a balanced solution to the conflict and alleviate regional tensions.

We support the call by IGAD and the African Union for the parties to be held accountable for violations of their own agreements. It is also essential that they be held accountable with regard to their responsibility for the heinous crimes committed, in accordance with international law and international humanitarian law. In that context, we believe that the African Union and the Government of South Sudan must accelerate the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan, as agreed by the parties in the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. We must urgently protect witnesses.

In conclusion, we wish to express our support for the United Nations Mission in South Sudan in its efforts to protect the population, which is facing numerous difficulties. We support the recommendations of the Secretary-General aimed at strengthening the Mission's ability to do so. We trust that a new mandate for the Mission that includes the support and training for Government and security institutions regarding issues relating to international humanitarian law and the investigation of grave violations of human rights will lead to adequate conditions for achieving the sustainable peace that South Sudan needs.

Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoue (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): Côte d'Ivoire thanks Ms. Bintou Keita, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Mr. Ismail Wais, Special Envoy for South Sudan of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), for their briefings on the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and on the political process in that country.

My intervention will focus on the following points: the political process initiated by IGAD through the second phase of the High-level Revitalization Forum of the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan, the humanitarian and human rights situation and the renewal of the UNMISS mandate.

Côte d'Ivoire commends all IGAD-led initiatives in the political process and welcomes the successful holding of the second phase of the High-level Revitalization Forum on the peace agreement, despite persistent tensions. The level of participation by the various actors in the South Sudan conflict in the second phase, as well as the intense consultations that took place in Addis Ababa, point to the gradual ownership of the political process by all parties.

My delegation is gratified that the parties have agreed on some adjustments to the 2015 peace agreement and encourages them to continue discussions on governance and security issues under the auspices of Special Envoy Wais, as part of the upcoming resumption of the second phase of the Forum. Côte d'Ivoire reaffirms its support for a political solution to the South Sudan crisis, and we welcome the renewed commitment of the parties to respect the cessation of hostilities agreement of 21 December 2017.

My country remains concerned about the precarious humanitarian situation and calls on the international community to support the efforts of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs with a view to ensuring that funding needs are met and that people can benefit from humanitarian assistance.

With regard to the human rights situation, my country is concerned about allegations of massive violations and abuses by the parties involved, including gender-based sexual violence and violence against children, as indicated in the report of the Human Rights Council Commission of Inquiry on South Sudan. My country urges the South Sudanese authorities to shed light on those allegations, to identify the parties responsible and to bring them to justice.

In that regard, my country joins the call by the Peace and Security Council of the African Union, at its 751st meeting, for the South Sudanese Transitional Government of National Unity and the Peace and Security Council of the African Union to urgently sign a memorandum of understanding on establishing the Hybrid Court and its swift integration into the country's legal framework. Côte d'Ivoire remains convinced that the setting up and operationalization of the Hybrid Court will contribute to calming social tensions and fostering reconciliation among the South Sudanese people.

With regard to UNMISS, my country deplores the obstacles to the implementation of the Mission's mandate, in violation of the status of forces agreement, as my delegation believes that the presence of UNMISS contributes to stabilization and and helps protect many South Sudanese civilians. It is therefore important to ensure the optimal operation of the Mission in a secure environment.

In that regard, we endorse the recommendations of the Secretary General's report (S/2018/143) on the renewal of the Mission's mandate and on capacity-building for the South Sudanese Government and its security institutions on important issues such as violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the progress made in the deployment of the contingents of the Regional Protection Force and calls on the Government of South Sudan to remove the remaining obstacles that slow down the effective operationalization of the Force.

In conclusion, my delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's initiative on assessing the police and troop capacity of UNMISS, and hopes that the results of that review will help the Mission adapt its operations to the needs on the ground.

Côte d'Ivoire calls on all warring parties in South Sudan to accept that a military solution cannot be the answer to the conflict in their country. Only political negotiations with the participation of all and an agreement reached by all parties can put an end to the conflict they face, which is tearing their beautiful country apart and only serves to prolong the suffering of the South Sudanese people.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now give the floor to the representative of South Sudan.

Mr. Malok (South Sudan): Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, for your leadership of the Security Council this month and to acknowledge the role of your predecessor in leading the Council last month. I would also like to thank Ms. Bintou Keita, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Ambassador Ismail Wais, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Special Envoy for South Sudan, for their briefings.

The Transitional Government of National Unity takes note of the special report of the Secretary-General (S/2018/143)on the renewal of the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS)

and would like to thank Mr. Kevin Kennedy and the entire UNMISS review team for their time and efforts.

I would be remiss if I did not thank Mr. David Shearer, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the troop-contributing countries and all the men and women of the UNMISS in the civilian, military and police components for their tireless and courageous efforts in executing their mandate.

The Transitional Government of National Unity acknowledges that its primary responsibility is to protect its own population. However, it cannot exercise that responsibility while being constrained by voices calling for an armed embargo and sanctions and denying external support to the country.

The report acknowledges that South Sudan came into being with extremely limited institutional capacity in all areas of governance and Government services. The situation in South Sudan is not black and white. Development is achieved in a country over time — something that South Sudan did not have because it fell into conflict less than three years into its statehood. Instead of equating South Sudan with other countries whose development evolved over decades, we call upon the international community to view the Transitional Government of National Unity as its partner in order to facilitate meaningful development.

The protection-of-civilians sites approach was never designed as a long-term endeavour. It is therefore paramount that a way forward be found. Certain areas enjoy relative calm and stability, and we would therefore encourage the voluntary repatriation of the internally displaced to such areas. We welcome the readiness of UNMISS to explore lessons learned from the closure of the Melut site and hope that such lessons will soon be applied in the other protection-of-civilian sites. The sites have long been a source of friction between the Government and UNMISS. We therefore welcome UNMISS measures to ensure that sites are weapon-free, among other things, and encourage much more to be done in that respect.

The Transitional Government of National Unity stands ready to fully cooperate with UNMISS and various humanitarian actors, through the Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs and all relevant Government institutions or organs, to ensure that people in need receive the attention they so deserve. We also encourage UNMISS and various humanitarian actors to work in a more coherent manner in order to avoid duplication of effort and to maximize the resources at their disposal.

The Transitional Government of National Unity is working to build confidence among the civilian population through initiatives such as a national dialogue, so that people feel safe enough to return to their homes. We should also be mindful of those in protection-of-civilians sites who do not seek shelter because of insecurity, but rather to advance their own political and economic agendas.

The Transitional Government of National Unity is deeply concerned and alarmed about the allegations of sexual misconduct perpetrated by UNMISS police in Wau and hopes they are just isolated cases. It is unfortunate that UNMISS police took advantage of women in a vulnerable situation who were under their protection. We welcome the steps taken by the leadership of UNMISS to withdraw the accused contingent and launch an investigation into the matter. We hope that the investigation will be credible so as to protect the long-standing good reputation of the Blue Helmets.

I would like to point out that the Government decided not to sign the declaration of principles during the second phase of the High-level Revitalization Forum, because it was optional.

With regard to the constraints faced by UNMISS when patrolling certain areas, the Government would like to suggest joint patrols and assistance in building the capacity of local security personnel, while helping to maintain peace and security in patrol areas. The Government has always called for the reinstatement of capacity-building in the UNMISS mandate. We note that the report recommends some form of it, but we disagree with the notion that capacity-building may contribute to the conflict. On the contrary, strengthening institutions such as the police, army and the judiciary by building their capacity in international law, humanitarian law and all other relevant law would help to promote and professionalize the rule of law.

In connection with the calls for an adjustment of some elements of the current Regional Protection force mandate, and in the light of the improved security situation in Juba, the Transitional Government of National Unity would like to suggest the deployment of the Regional Protection Force in other areas that are currently experiencing instability.

The Transitional Government of National Unity approached the High-level Revitalization Forum in good faith and with the willingness to reach an amicable agreement with all the parties. However, the unrealistic demands made by opposition groups in the previous session of the Forum are unhelpful and seek to push us further from the quest for a sustainable peace agreement.

The Transitional Government of National Unity strongly reaffirms its commitment to the peace process and to working with UNMISS and the international community as a whole. South Sudan continues to deeply appreciate the support that the international community provided for our liberation struggle, as well as the goodwill continuously demonstrated by many friendly nations and by the United Nations. We also appreciate the efforts under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which culminated in the signing of the 2015 Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan and the recent High-level Revitalization Forum initiative.

In conclusion, we hope and trust that there will be greater improvement towards a more effective and constructive dialogue with the Security Council in shaping the vital UNMISS mandate, and with UNMISS in its implementation thereafter.

The President (*spoke in Arabic*): There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers. I now invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.